

# African American Community in Washington State



*2003 Tobacco Monologue cast and Center for MultiCultural Health staff after a performance at Franklin High School in King County*

## Overview

- The prevalence rate of cigarette smoking among African Americans in Washington State is 23.3 percent. Anecdotally, African Americans share a disproportionate disease burden of chronic disease associated with tobacco use.<sup>1</sup>
- African Americans are among the most likely to report wanting to quit and making a quit attempt. However, fewer African American smokers have successfully quit than smokers of other races/ethnicities.<sup>2</sup>
- More than 25 percent of African American youth are exposed to secondhand smoke in the home.<sup>3</sup>
- The tobacco industry attempts to maintain a positive image and public support among African Americans by supporting cultural events and making contributions to minority higher education institutions, elected officials, civic and community organizations, and scholarship programs.<sup>4</sup>

## Key Accomplishments

- For the past three years, "Tobacco Monologues", a series of vignettes on adventures, challenges, losses, disappointments, and trials of tobacco use and secondhand smoke, have been presented to youth of color across Washington State by the Center for MultiCultural Health, National Youth Congress, and Bemby Consulting Services.
- The Center for MultiCultural Health, Southeast Youth and Families, and Seaspot Media Group will

be promoting the 18- to 29-year-old Tobacco Quit Line campaign. The campaign will create visibility concerning the issue of tobacco prevention and cessation in the Metropolitan Urban Seattle area through culturally appropriate events, the Seaspot Magazine, and web and street promotion. The "Respect Yourself...Take Control Quit Smoking" ad will be featured in the November 2005 issue of the Seaspot Magazine.

## Plans and Priorities

- The Center for MultiCultural will continue to build capacity, raise awareness, and provide technical assistance in the African American community. We will also collaborate with local and national

tobacco prevention agencies to explore and develop culturally relevant educational materials and tools to educate, encourage and assist African Americans in harm reduction and tobacco cessation.

<sup>1</sup> Washington State Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2004; The Health of Washington State Chronic Disease Supplement, 2004

<sup>2</sup> African Americans and Tobacco, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003

<sup>3</sup> Tobacco and African Americans, American Legacy Foundation, 2003

<sup>4</sup> African Americans and Tobacco, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003